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# STRESS MANAGEMENT

*stress - what it is and how to  
manage it*

# **What is Stress?**

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***Mental***

***Physical***

***Emotional***

# Stress is . . .

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“the body’s response to any demand placed on it. Whether pleasant or unpleasant.”

**Dr. Hans Selye**  
*(the Father of Stress Research)*

***Fight or Flight***

# What causes you stress?





# Stress is . . .

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*A **NORMAL** part of life.*

CAPT J. Vieira, CHC, USN, 04/2001

*Our problem is not stress but*

**OVERSTRESS**

*or*

*too much of the **WRONG** kind  
of stress.*

# **Bad Stress**

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**when you've reached the limits  
of your ability to cope . . .**

***"I feel under a lot of pressure - it's just  
too much!"***

***"Everything and everyone bothers me.  
I don't have any patience anymore."***

***"I just seem to get into conflicts with  
everyone."***

# Short Term Responses

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- jittery or butterflies in stomach
- lump in throat
- tightness in chest
- heart pounding
- pain in neck or back
- feel “all wound up”
- racing thoughts
- “fly off the handle” at something minor

# Major Causes of Stress

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- personal loss
- illness or injury
- job change - PCS
- financial problems
- family changes
- upcoming retirement
- *CHANGE OF ANY KIND*



# Signs of Stress

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- anxiety
- bursts of anger
- low frustration tolerance
- tired all the time
- irritability
- forgetfulness
- accident proneness
- not able to relax

# Signs of Stress

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- change in eating habits
- change in sleeping patterns
- preoccupied
- difficulty concentrating
- self-doubt
- feelings of worthlessness
- feelings of suspiciousness
- awfulizing - *telling yourself how awful you feel*
- controlling behaviors

# Physical Symptoms of Stress

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- migraine or tension headaches
- muscle aches
- tiredness or fatigue
- back pain
- ulcers
- high blood pressure
- skin problems

# How to Handle Stress

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1. Admit you are stressed

2. Identify the *CAUSES*

*Is there anything you can change?  
Are there ways in which **YOU** are  
being your **OWN Worst Enemy**?*

3. Take *PROACTIVE* steps to  
manage it



# Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

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1. Know your **LIMITATIONS** and set realistic goals
2. The only person you can change is **YOU**
3. Don't fight **IMPOSSIBLE SITUATIONS**

*"God grant me the Serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
the Courage to change the things I can,  
and the Wisdom to know the  
difference."*

# Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

## 4. Keep **PERSPECTIVE**

- *“and this too shall pass”*
- *Take one day at a time*
- *Find humor in your situation*

## 5. Avoid too much **CHANGE** all at once

## 6. **RESOLVE DIFFERENCES** right away

## 7. **REST** and **RELAX** - learn to let go

# Twelve Steps to Stress Relief

8. Eat **HEALTHY FOOD** - watch your diet
9. Get plenty of **EXERCISE**
10. Share your **FEELINGS**
11. Do something you enjoy
12. Practice the **RELAXATION RESPONSE**

Say **RELAX** 20 times

# How to Handle Negative Thoughts

*(realize the power of your mind)*

1. Say to yourself **STOP!**
2. **DIVERT** your attention
3. Keep **PERSPECTIVE**
4. Say the word **RELAX** 20 times  
and let your body get heavy



# Other Suggestions

- **Use Relaxation Tapes**
- **Meditate**
- **Listen to Books while driving**
- **Listen to soothing music**